



To: Joel Boyd, Superintendent
From: Billie Jo Turner, Assistant Superintendent of Finance/CFO
RE: Response to Motion on Late Submission of EOY Report
Date: February 10, 2022

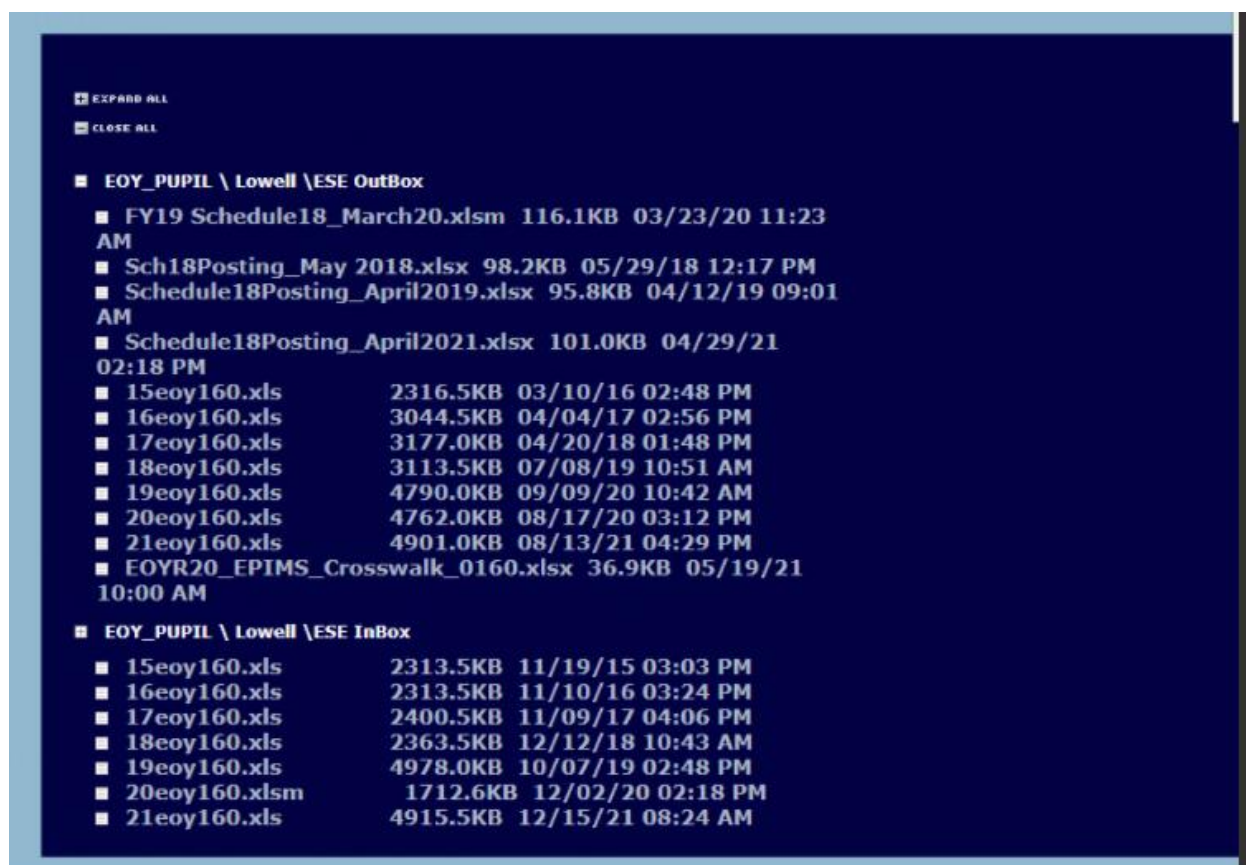
This is in response to the motion made by Jackie Doherty: "Request the Superintendent provide the committee with a report on why the 2020-2021 End of Year Financial Report due to DESE on Oct. 1 required multiple extensions and a warning letter from the Associate Commissioner, as well as steps taken to ensure timely submission going forward."

Response:

Per the security portal screenshot below, the end of year report has historically been late. It shows that since the earliest date below of 2015, the end of year report has been submitted after the due date of October 1st. This occurs for numerous reasons.


- 1) Grant data is required on the report but final reports for grants are not even due until October 31 which means the data is not completed on Oct 1.
- 2) We wait until the City gives us their numbers. As reflected on the City letter, their data was not submitted to us until October 8th.
- 3) This year in particular, we were late due to a myriad of pandemic related issues. In particular, the report required additional data to report on all of the pandemic funds. There were many questions across the state on how to complete this.
- 4) Seventy percent of finance staff left so most staff that normally participate in this reporting process were replaced with new staff. The most seasoned staff member who was primarily responsible for this report left at the time in which the extension expired. She was limited as to when she could return to LPS to complete the report and experienced numerous obstacles such as issues with remote access and the Munis system being updated during the weekends when she was coming in to complete.
- 5) Up until a week before this was submitted, we were still working with City Hall on corrections to the report.

Rob O'Donnell from DESE informed me that approximately 40 districts received the same letter this year. Last year, nearly 62 districts were sent this letter in early December. All in all, we were not alone with the obstacles faced or the late submissions. Per the attached email that was shared with the School Committee on 12/9, our goal is to have multiple people trained on the report to avoid facing similar challenges if and when staff turnover ever occurs during the reporting cycle.



Turner, Billie Jo
Thu 12/9/2021 4:57 PM

To: School Committee Mail
Cc: Boyd, Joel
Bcc: Jaclyn Kelleher-Roy <kelleherroyj@weston.org>

 EOY21 - Lowell.pdf
25 KB

Hello all,

The attached letter is indeed alarming. Please note that due to the staff member who completed this report resigning, we anticipated a delay and requested an extension with DESE. Completing the report from afar proved to be more of a challenge than originally anticipated. The completed report was forwarded to the City (CFO and Auditor) a few minutes ago for their review. Due to these circumstances and the alarming letter that we did not foresee, we have recognized that having only one person know how to complete the report leaves us in a precarious situation and could handicap us. To prevent such from ever happening, Ms. Kelleher has agreed to train multiple staff members on this report so that we don't face this concern again. Please note that I would always share any concerns with you immediately if I knew about them. In